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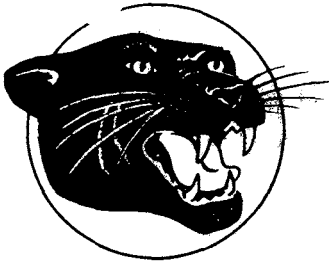
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Panther Sports News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--(Feb. 5, 1986)--Eastern Illinois University's men's track and field squad will compete Saturday (Feb. 8) in the Illini Classic at 10 a.m. at Champaign.

Approximately 30 schools are expected to be in the non-scoring meet, including Illinois, Illinois State, Southern Illinois and Association of Mid-Continent Universities Conference rivals Southwest Missouri and Western Illinois.

"This will be a very tough meet," said Eastern head coach Neil Moore. "Right now, we're getting a chance to be pushed to our limits, and this gives us a chance for good seedings at the conference meet (on March 1-2)."

Eastern had four placers at the Indiana Invitational last weekend in a meet Moore said was similar to the Illini Classic. "I'd say they're comparable with the classic maybe having a little edge. They're both high-quality meets."

Sophomore Jim Maton (Shelbyville) captured fourth place in the 880-yard run at the Indiana Invitational after having the fastest qualifying time in the time trials. Maton's time was 1:54.23 in the final and 1:53.89 in the trial.

He has the AMCU's best times in the 880 with last week's performance and was also tops in the league for the 1,000 at 2:12.74 and for the mile at 4:14.09.

"Jim has done a super job this year," praised Moore. "I think we're going to see a few school records fall in his area this season."

The "EIU Cannon Corps" also represented Eastern well at Indiana with three placers in the shot put. Senior Larry Thoennissen (Morton) was sixth at 54-3½, junior Dan Matas (Oak Park-River Forest) seventh at 53-2½ and sophomore Jeff Gennarelli (Berwyn-Morton West) eighth at 52-0. Thoennissen leads the AMCU in the 35-pound weight throw at 55-5 3/4 and is second in the shot put at 54-4 3/4. Matas heads the conference's shot putters at 55-1.